Message Text

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CONFIDENTIAL LIMA 8237

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, SHUM, PE, CI

SUBJECT: REFUGEES: OCCUPATION OF UN HCR OFFICES

REF: (A) LIMA 8198, (B) LIMA 5736, (C) LIMA 7098

1. THE EIGHT CHILEAN REFUGEES CONTINUE TO OCCUPY PEACEFULLY THE LOCAL OFFICES OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. THEY REPORTEDLY HAVE BEGUN A HUNGER STRIKE TO DRAMATIZE THEIR PLIGHT AND THEIR DEMANDS. GOP AUTHORITIES WILL NOT MOVE TO EVICT THEM UNLESS REQUESTED TO DO SO BY UN OFFICIALS. ACCORDING TO A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMISION ECUMUNICA DE ASISTENCIA SOCIAL (CEDAS), WHICH ADMINISTERS TO THE NEEDS OF THE CHILEAN REFUGEES UNDER THE UNHCR MANDATE, THE CHILEANS WHO HAVE OCCUPIED UNHCR OFFICES YESTERDAY BELONG BOTH TO THE GROUP UNDER THE OFFICIAL PROTECTION OF THE HIGH COMISSION BY VIRTUE OF THE 1974 AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOP AND THE UNHCR (REFTEL B), AND TO THE GROUP THAT ARRIVED IN PERU SUBSEQUENT TO THE EXPIRATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON AUG 5, 1975. THE STATUS OF THIS LATTER GROUP IS CURRENTLY THE SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE UNHCR AND THE GOP.

2. EMBOFF DISCUSSED THE REFUGEES' CHARGES WITH CEDAS REPCONFIDENTIAL.

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RESENTATIVE. THE LATTER REFUTED THE ALLEGATION THAT SOME CHILEANS HAVE WAITED 4 YEARS FOR RELOCATION, NOTING THAT THE FIRST REFUGEES ARRIVED AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOP AND THE UNHCR IN AUGUST 1974. HE CONFURMED THAT RENE SALAS WAS EXPELLED TO CHILE BY PERUVIAN AUTHORITIES, BUT SAID THAT, TO THE BEST OF CEDAS' KNOWLEDGE, HE IS NOT PRESENTLY DETAINED IN ARICA OR ELSEWHERE. WITH REGARD TO THE CHILEANS NOW IN JAIL, HE SAID

THAT FOUR REFUGEES UNDER UNHCR MANDATE WERE ARRESTED IN LATE JULY FOR PAINTING SLOGANS ALLUSIVE TO FORMER CHILEAN PRESIDENT ALLENDE ON THE EXTERIOR WALLS OF CEDAS HEADQUARTERS AND FOR OFFENSES TO THE DIGNITY OF THE PERUVIAN FLAG. DESPITE EFFORTS OF UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE GILES SICOTTE TO NEGOTIATE THEIR RELEASE, THESE FOUR CHILEANS ARE APPARENTLY SLATED FOR A MILITARY TRIAL. WITH REGARD TO OTHER CHARGES, AS WE HAVE REPORTED EARLIER (REFTEL B), THE CHILEAN REFUGEES HAVE ALLEGEDLY BEEN SUBJECT TO HARASSMENT BY PERUVIAN AUTHORITIES AND SOME HAVE BEEN EXPELLED TO ECUADOR. CEDAS REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT OF ALL THE CHARGES MADE BY THE REFUGEES OCCUPYING UNHCR OFFICES, THE ONLY ONE THAT IS JUSTIFIED IS THAT THIS GROUP AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN WAITING YEARS FOR RELOCATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES AND THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCH RELOCATION, WHICH IS LARGELY BEYOND UNHCR CONTROL, CONTINUE TO BE DIM.

3. OF THE EIGHT CHILEANS OCCUPYING UNHCR OFFICES, FOUR ARE ON THE LIST OF REFUGEES STILL AWAITING FINAL US DETERMINATION ON THEIR PAROLE ELIGIBILITY, WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY BISHOP RICARDO DURAND FLOREZ OF CALLAO (REFTEL C). OF THE REMAINING FOUR, ONE IS THE SON OF A NOW-DECEASED REFUGEE WHOSE NAME WAS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPT FOR PAROLE STATUS CONSIDERATION. THE OTHER THREE WERE DESCRIBED BY CEDAS REPRESENTATIVE AS COMMUNISTS. ALL BUT ONE OF THE REFUGEES ARE MARRIED, THREE TO PERUVIAN WOMEN, AND SEVERAL HAVE SMALL CHILDREN. ONE IS REPORTEDLY SUFFERING FROM TUBERCULOSIS. SHLAUDEMAN CONFIDENTIAL

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